

# What to expect during your visit

TAKING STEPS TO A HEALTHY BACK AND IMPROVED QUALITY OF LIFE

Your chiropractor may be treating your back pain, neck pain, headache, or other aches and pains, but he or she needs to understand how your body functions as a whole. In particular he or she will focus on your spine, joints, muscles, and nervous system. Your chiropractor needs a complete picture of your health history and overall current health in order to provide the best possible treatment for you.

Set aside at least 30 minutes for your first visit to the chiropractor. Future visits typically last 15 minutes or less, and this may vary from chiropractor to chiropractor, and is affected by the type of treatment you require. Here's what you might expect.

## THE FIRST VISIT

Your chiropractor may ask about the following:

- personal and family medical history
- major illnesses you have experienced
- surgeries or operations you have had
- medications you are taking
- a description of your present condition
- the steps you have taken to manage your condition
- your diet and exercise
- your sleeping habits, daily activities, work routine, stress level, and home life

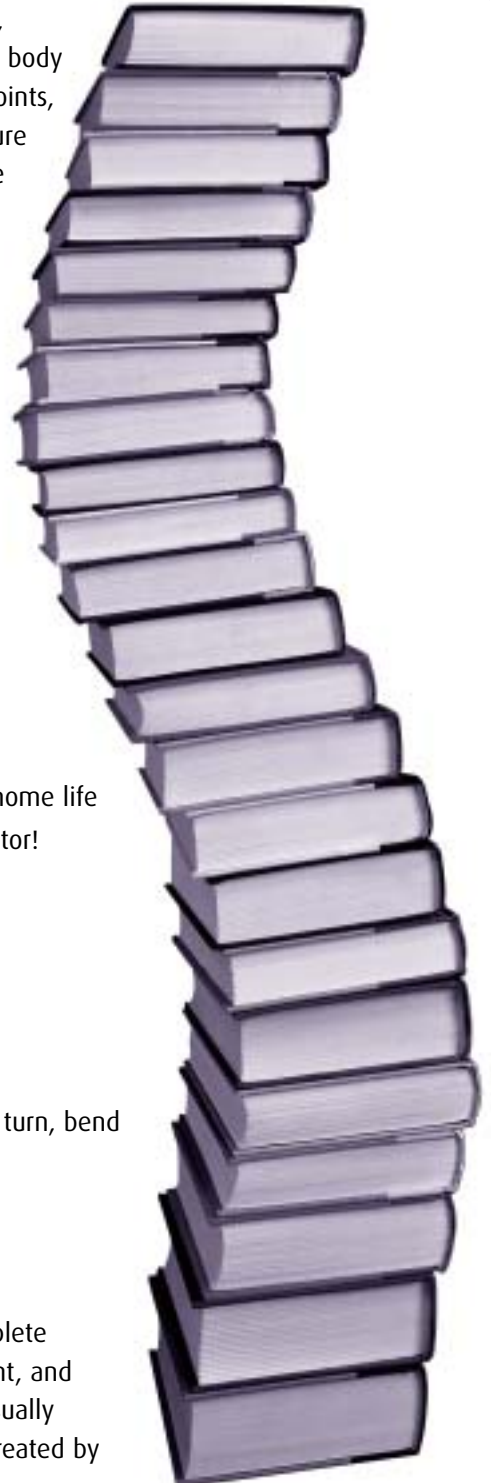
**TIP:** Wear comfortable clothes and shoes for your visit to the chiropractor!

Your chiropractor may ask you to change into a gown to perform some of these tests:

- a check of your blood pressure, pulse, and breathing
- a test of your reflexes, strength, and sensations
- an analysis of your posture
- a x-ray of your spine
- an analysis of your movement - he/she will observe how you walk, turn, bend or lift things, as well as how your body moves in the affected area
- a hands-on evaluation of how well your spine moves, identifying restrictions and areas of improper motion

**TIP:** Bring a copy of any x-rays or radiology reports you have.

These assessments give your chiropractor a better picture of your complete health. He or she will make a diagnosis, prescribe a course of treatment, and once the matter of informed consent has been discussed, treatment usually begins. If your chiropractor diagnoses a condition more appropriately treated by another health care professional, he or she will make a referral.



## STAGES OF CARE

- **Relief care** is provided for relief of immediate pain, restricted mobility, and discomfort. Depending on the diagnosis, your age, physical condition, how long you have had the current complaint, and previous injuries, a few or several visits over a relatively short period of time, may be necessary.
- **Corrective care** treats conditions that are more severe, recurring or have existed with or without pain for some time. These may require a longer, more complex period of care. Once the severity of your condition has decreased through relief care, corrective care helps to restore normal function to your spine, muscles, supporting tissues, and the nerves affected by them.
- **Supportive or maintenance care** helps you maintain and preserve the benefits you've achieved from relief and corrective care. Chiropractors are also trained to detect conditions in their early stages, often before you feel pain or reduced mobility. Continuing to work with your chiropractor and having periodic spinal check-ups and treatments, if needed, will keep your spine as healthy as possible. Your chiropractor will work with you to find a maintenance schedule that suits your condition, health care goals, and lifestyle.

Your treatment from the chiropractor, regardless of the stage of care, will often include exercise, diet, and other healthy living suggestions to help keep you healthy and strong.

## HOW TO FIND A CHIROPRACTOR

To find a chiropractor near you, contact the Ontario Chiropractic Association.

Toll free: 1-877-DCs-CARE (327-2273)

Or visit our website at [www.chiropractic.on.ca](http://www.chiropractic.on.ca)



## HOW OFTEN DO I NEED TO SEE A CHIROPRACTOR?

Your chiropractor will discuss a schedule of care, which will depend on your specific circumstances.

For some people chiropractic treatment is like a regular tune-up, to help deal with the daily wear and tear of life.

For others, it's simply an effective treatment when pain or discomfort strikes.

Take the time to discuss with your chiropractor the treatment plan that's best for you.

## TREATMENT THAT STANDS UP.